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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/536,589	05/26/2005	Masaru Tanaka	T-1456	9224
802	7590	02/15/2008	EXAMINER	
PATENTTM.US			FLETCHER III, WILLIAM P	
P. O. BOX 82788			ART UNIT	
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/536,589

Applicant(s)

TANAKA ET AL.

Examiner

William P. Fletcher III

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Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 November 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-14, 23 and 24 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 15-19, 21 and 22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 20 and 25-27 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 May 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/23/2005 and 12/17/2006
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of claims 1-27 in the reply filed on July 30, 2007, is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that search and examination of all claims does not represent an undue burden on the Examiner. This is not found persuasive because this case is a 371 and, as demonstrated in the requirement, *unity of invention* is lacking.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

2. Claims 1-14 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on July 30, 2007.

3. Claims 23 and 24 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on November 16, 2007.

4. Consequently, this action concerns claims 15-22 and 25-27.

Priority

5. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Information Disclosure Statement

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6. The information disclosure statements filed June 23, 2005, and December 17, 2006, have been considered.

Drawings

7. The drawings were received on May 26, 2005. These drawings are acceptable.

Specification

8. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it is too long and spans more than one paragraph. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).
9. Applicant is reminded of the proper content of an abstract of the disclosure.

A patent abstract is a concise statement of the technical disclosure of the patent and should include that which is new in the art to which the invention pertains. If the patent is of a basic nature, the entire technical disclosure may be new in the art, and the abstract should be directed to the entire disclosure. If the patent is in the nature of an improvement in an old apparatus, process, product, or composition, the abstract should include the technical disclosure of the improvement. In certain patents, particularly those for compounds and compositions, wherein the process for making and/or the use thereof are not obvious, the abstract should set forth a process for making and/or use thereof. If the new technical disclosure involves modifications or alternatives, the abstract should mention by way of example the preferred modification or alternative.

The abstract should not refer to purported merits or speculative applications of the invention and should not compare the invention with the prior art.

Where applicable, the abstract should include the following:

- (1) if a machine or apparatus, its organization and operation;
- (2) if an article, its method of making;
- (3) if a chemical compound, its identity and use;
- (4) if a mixture, its ingredients;
- (5) if a process, the steps.

Extensive mechanical and design details of apparatus should not be given.

10. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that

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the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

The following guidelines illustrate the preferred layout for the specification of a utility application. These guidelines are suggested for the applicant's use.

Arrangement of the Specification

As provided in 37 CFR 1.77(b), the specification of a utility application should include the following sections in order. Each of the lettered items should appear in upper case, without underlining or bold type, as a section heading. If no text follows the section heading, the phrase "Not Applicable" should follow the section heading:

- (a) TITLE OF THE INVENTION.
- (b) CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS.
- (c) STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT.
- (d) THE NAMES OF THE PARTIES TO A JOINT RESEARCH AGREEMENT.
- (e) INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC.
- (f) BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION.
 - (1) Field of the Invention.
 - (2) Description of Related Art including information disclosed under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
- (g) BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION.
- (h) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING(S).
- (i) DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION.
- (j) CLAIM OR CLAIMS (commencing on a separate sheet).
- (k) ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE (commencing on a separate sheet).
- (l) SEQUENCE LISTING (See MPEP § 2424 and 37 CFR 1.821-1.825. A "Sequence Listing" is required on paper if the application discloses a nucleotide or amino acid sequence as defined in 37 CFR 1.821(a) and if the required "Sequence Listing" is not submitted as an electronic document on compact disc).

11. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The following title is suggested: PROCESS FOR PREPARING MICRO-PILLAR STRUCTURE.

Claim Objections

12. Claims 20, 25, 26, and 27, are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim may not depend from another, multiple dependent claim. See MPEP § 608.01(n). Accordingly, the claims 20, 25, and 26, have not been further treated on the merits.

13. Consequently, in this action, claims 15-19, 21, and 22, are treated on the merits.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

14. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

15. **Claims 15-19, 21, and 22, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.**

A. Claim 15:

i. The term "moist" in claim 15 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "moist" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention. It is unclear how moist the

atmosphere must be in order to be considered moist within the context of the invention. Note that claim 19 is not indefinite in this fashion. Further, it is unclear with what the atmosphere may be moistened (water is presumed, but "moist" is open to all other compounds having a vapor pressure under operational conditions).

ii. Further, this claim recites "close-packed," which is indefinite. It is unclear how close together the elements of the structure must be in order to be considered "close." Further, there are different geometric configurations that represent a closely packed structure (hexagonal closest packing or face-centered closest packing, for example). It is unclear what structure/geometric configurations are included/excluded by the term "close-packed." As such, the metes and bounds of the claimed subject matter are impossible to determine.

iii. Finally, this claim recites "...with said droplets used as casts..." which renders the claim indefinite because the precise nature and extent of the claimed use is not clear and the metes and bounds of the claimed subject matter are impossible to determine.

- B. Claim 16: The phrase "if required" renders the claim indefinite since it is not clear what conditions/circumstances "require" said modifier.
- C. Claim 17: Claim 16 recites hydrophobic or biodegradable, while claim 17 recites hydrophobic *and/or* biodegradable, which appears to envision

an embodiment (the "and" embodiment) not included within the scope of claim 16.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

16. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

17. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

18. **Claims 15-19, 21, and 22, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the machine translation of JP 2001-157574 A in view of Widawski et al. ("Self-organized honeycomb morphology of star-polymer polystyrene films," *Nature*, Vol. 369, 2 June 1994, pages 387-389).**

A. JP '574 clearly teaches all of the limitations of these claims except the step of bisecting by peeling with adhesive tape, as recited in claims 15 and 22,

and blowing an atmosphere having a high humidity onto an evaporation interface of said organic solvent.

B. Widawski teaches a similar process for the production of a honeycomb structure in which adhesive tape is utilized to reveal a desired amount/configuration of the honeycomb structure [see paragraph bridging pages 387-388]. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to modify the process of JP '574 so as to expose a desired portion of the honeycomb structure so as to yield a configuration suitable for a desired end use.

C. Widawski further teaches a similar process for the production of a honeycomb structure "under a flow of moist gas" [abstract]. Consequently, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to modify the process of JP '574 so as to utilize a flow of moist air. Since it is shown by Widawski that such is known as suitable in the art for delivering moist air for a process of forming honeycomb structures, one skilled in the art would have been motivated by the desire and expectation of successfully delivering the moist air.

Conclusion

19. The prompt development of clear issues in the prosecution history requires that applicant's reply to this Office action be fully responsive (MPEP § 714.02). When filing an amendment, applicant should specifically point out the support for any amendment made to the disclosure, including new or amended claims (MPEP §§ 714.02 & 2163). A fully responsive reply to this Office action, if it includes new or amended claims, must therefore include an explicit citation (i.e., page number and line number) of that/those

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portion(s) of the original disclosure which applicant contends support(s) the new or amended limitation(s).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William P. Fletcher III whose telephone number is (571) 272-1419. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 0900h-1700h.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Timothy H. Meeks can be reached on (571) 272-1423. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/William Phillip Fletcher III/

Primary Examiner

February 4, 2008